Washington and can get anyone on the phone at the drop of a hat.''

Of course, in Washington one expects the customary compliments from colleagues. But the genuine exuberance for Jordan goes beyond the predictable.

Jordan describes herself as ''quite low-key . . . I know what my limits are.'' She doesn't mention the gala with Princess Diana or her vacations on Martha's Vineyard with the Clintons. She doesn't bring up the dinner at her home four years ago—the president-elect's first Washington party—or the fact that she sent cyclamens to all her neighbors apologizing for any inconvenience it may have caused.

Her official biography for the inauguration is three short paragraphs.

''She's raised in the old school,'' says events planner Carolyn Peachey, a close friend. ''Your name is in the newspaper three times: born, married, died.''

Hillary Rodham Clinton calls her ''a woman of many talents.'' Jordan's work on the inaugural committee, says the first lady, highlights her ''wonderful'' organizational and management skills. ''What I think I like most about her is her warm friendship, coupled with her marvelous sense of humor.''

Vernon Jordan is not in the habit of discussing his personal life with the press. But he is downright effusive when it comes to his wife of 10 years.

''She's smart, independent, caring, loyal,'' he says. ''She is my best friend in the world.'' The suggestion that she is shy produces Jordan's famed booming laugh. ''She's not shy *at all.* She just keeps her own counsel. And she is in many ways a very private person, which is one of her more admirable qualities.''

Nonetheless, it is difficult to be an entirely private person if one happens to be married to one of the most influential—and socially gregarious—men in the city. It is ''just nonsense,'' says Jordan, to even suggest that his wife was asked to chair the inauguration because of his friendship with the first couple.

''I think she did this out of a sense of duty and responsibility,'' he says. ''She loves to make things work right. And it's an honor, and I think she views it that way.''

There is, in fact, a long history of public service in her life. She was born in Tuskegee, Ala., one of five children of a surgeon who ran the only hospital in the city that treated black patients.

Jordan attended prep school and then went to Vassar, where she was one of four black students. She was so fair-skinned that she had to tell classmates she was black. ''You didn't want to have a conversation where you had to get up and walk out,'' she says. ''Once you say it, you don't have to tell many more. It goes around quickly.''

She took graduate courses in social work at the University of Chicago and later taught there and served as head of social services at the university's medical center. She married, had four children and divorced 11 years later. She stayed in Chicago, working full time and raising her children. ''I was used to running my own life,'' she says.

That life was shaken by the 1981 death of a daughter in a car accident. ''I think it makes you just stop and relive your life,'' says Jordan. ''I mean, you think about your life and what's important, and it changes it.''

Her other children—now in their thirties—were grown when she married Vernon in 1986. They had met years earlier while both were working with the Urban League. His first wife, Shirley, died of multiple sclerosis in 1985.

''What I like best about him is when we sit down to talk—he's very interested,'' she says. ''And he's fun to be with. He's totally unpredictable.''

And Vernon Jordan says, ''When I want to get it straight, I talk to Ann.''

And then he adds the one-liner of every clever husband: ''The fact is that I married up.''

Her new husband brought to the marriage the lifestyle of a wealthy, powerful man in this town. ''It was sort of nice to enjoy the free time of living in Washington,'' she says. ''It also allowed me to pursue a lot of my own interests. I was very busy. And Vernon is a very—to say the least—he's fun.''

Being married to Jordan also brought invitations to every important social event in Washington, including the state dinner for South African President Nelson Mandela. ''It was one of the great thrills of my life,'' she says. Mandela told her ''a very funny story about his life after he got out of prison. . . . I'm certainly grateful for those kinds of opportunities.''

Aside from inaugural duties, Jordan's time these days is devoted to her five grandchildren (all under 5 years old), volunteering in the White House social office and serving on various boards: WETA, Sasha Bruce Youthworks, the Kennedy Center and the Child Welfare League of America.

She has settled into her life in the nation's capital, but her affection for Chicago is such that she travels there as often as once a month. ''It's a wonderful city and people don't realize it.'' Washington, she says, ''is a wonderful city of live in. I mean for living purposes, it's very easy to get around, the weather's wonderful, and very interesting people here.''

It was Jordan who pushed to include residents of Washington in more inaugural activities. She is most excited about the public events on the Mall, and she was instrumental in bringing ''King,'' the musical tribute to Martin Luther King Jr., to the celebration.

''I love the fact that it can be open,'' she says. ''Not only just free events, but very well done free events.'' She hopes to find time to drop by the children's tent for the storytellers: ''My grandchildren want to see it.''

Jordan doesn't mention the glamour of the inaugural balls. She'll attend five or six, wearing a dress that she's had a long time. ''I wear it every year to the Kennedy Center,'' she says. ''It's a black velvet dress that has—I don't know what you'd call 'em, not rhinestones but sort of sparkly'' decor on the shoulders. ''I love the dress.''

On that night, her husband says simply that he'll be doing ''whatever she says.''

And afterward, instead of all the exclusive after-ball parties, you might see the inaugural chairman celebrating at . . . McDonald's.

''That's my favorite,'' she says. ''A Quarter-Pounder without cheese. Then they have to cook it fresh. We're there all the time.''

RESPECT FOR DEMOCRACY AND THE STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, 2 weeks ago I came to this floor and spoke of an event that happened in the late 1930's in Montpelier, VT, the capital of Vermont, the city where I was born. I will recount that only briefly because we have the state of the Union message tonight. I hope it may be instructive to some.

In the late 1930's, then-President Franklin Roosevelt visited Vermont. To put this in context, during the Roosevelt landslide, President Roosevelt carried all States but two: the State of Maine and the State of Vermont. We were not a hotbed of Democratic action, Vermont.

The president of the National Life Insurance Co. of Vermont was standing on State Street. That building was directly across the street from where my family lived. He was standing next to my father, who was probably the lone Democrat in Montpelier.

President Roosevelt's car went by, and the president of National Life, an ardent, lifelong, fervent, and proud Republican, stood at attention, took his hat off, and held it over his heart as a mark of respect, as did other men on the street.

My father, who knew him well, chided him a little bit and said, ''I never thought I'd see the day you would salute Franklin Roosevelt.'' He turned to my father and said, ''Howard, I didn't salute Franklin Roosevelt. I saluted the President of the United States.'' As a child I remember that same gentleman repeating the story to me in my father's presence.

I mention this because he was also very proud of the fact that he was one of the ones who, as he said, voted for sanity when he voted for Alf Landon and not Franklin Roosevelt.

In a way it reflects a different time, but in many ways, a good time. The United States was, in the late 1930's, approaching our eventual entry into World War II, when we had to pull together. We also showed that we respected our institutions.

Tonight there will be some of us who agree and some of us who disagree with what President Clinton says in the state of the Union message. I hope that in expressing both our agreements and our disagreements we will resolve that there are three great institutions deserving our civil respect in this country: the institution of the Presidency; the institution of the Congress itself, which is demeaned when we do things that harm or degrade it; and the institution of the judiciary.

This great democracy exists because of the respect of its people for these three institutions. This great democracy is diminished if we, especially we in the Senate, diminish any of these. Debate, yes; but respect our institutions, also, yes.

I yield the floor.

CONCERNING THE NEED FOR ACCURATE GUIDELINES FOR BREAST CANCER SCREENING

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senator from Maine and the Senator from Maryland are recognized to speak for up to 15 minutes each, followed by a time reserved for Senator SPECTER from Pennsylvania for 10 minutes.

The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res 47) expressing the sense of the Senate concerning the need for accurate guidelines for breast cancer screening for women between the ages of 40 and 49.